

INDIA

and American Aggression on

VIETNAM

By BHUPESH GUPTA

COMMUNIST PARTY PUBLICATION

875

INDIA
and American Aggression on
VIETNAM

BHUPESH GUPTA

COMMUNIST PARTY PUBLICATION

No 11.—JULY 1966

Price: 30 paise

Printed by D. P. Sinha, at New Age Printing Press, Rani Jhansi Road,
New Delhi and published by him for Communist Party of India,
4/7 Asaf Ali Road, New Delhi.

ADVENT OF YANKEE IMPERIALISM IN VIETNAM

A barbarous war of aggression is going on in Vietnam. US imperialists have come from ten thousand miles away to wage this war on our Asian soil. They are making a mad bid to subjugate the Vietnamese people and turn their rich and beautiful land into a US colony and a springboard of aggression against other Asian countries. The recent massive bombing of North Vietnam on orders from President Johnson marks a new phase in the policy to extend and escalate the war.

For twelve years the brave Vietnamese people, the pride of all Asia, have been resisting this savage war with unrivalled heroism. They are defending their own country, defending all Asia and the peace and security of the world!

For centuries Asia has been subjected to domination and plunder by the imperialist West. Like India, Indo-China suffered colonial enslavement and national humiliation for full eighty years. Like our country Vietnam too witnessed great anti-imperialist upheavals at the end of World War II following the defeat of the Axis powers. The Vietnamese people rose in their glorious August 1945 Revolution and shook off the colonial yoke. With the legendary figure of Ho Chi Minh as its President, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was ushered in. The Indian National Congress and the entire people greeted the victory of the Vietnamese people with profound joy. But the imperialists were not to give up so easily.

French colonialists lost no time in starting a war against Vietnam to reconquer their lost colonial possession and for nine years, supported by other imperialist powers, they continued this war until at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 the

French met their final, crushing defeat. As is well known, Yankee imperialists in those days used to openly boast that they were the natural successors to the British, French and other colonial possessions. And it is with this objective in view that US imperialists immediately entered the scene and began to help their French blood-brothers. The Yankees had in mind the prospects of enormous profits as well as the strategic importance of Vietnam in the Far East and South-East Asia.

After their gamble in China, into which they had poured hundreds of millions of dollars and a fantastic quantity of military hardware, proved a total fiasco, Washington turned its attention to Korea and Indo-China. They launched the Korean war and stepped up their aid to the French. A treaty between the USA and the Indo-Chinese associate states was signed in 1950 and before the year was out the massive intervention by the USA in Indo-China had officially commenced. Funds, "military advisers", and arms and other war materials were sent from the USA to help the French allies but the US intention to step into the shoes of the latter was unconcealed. The former Commander-in-Chief of the French Union Forces in Indo-China, General Navarre, later praised the US material aid but complained that the American aid-givers "stroved to undermine and even destroy our interests".

When the French Forces were tottering on the brink of collapse at Dien Bien Phu, Americans thought of a massive intervention and wanted to "internationalise" the Indo-China conflict. Together with French military staff, US brass-hats drew their plan "Operation Vauteur" for direct US intervention in Vietnam and there was talk of even using tactical atomic bombs. World public opinion was too vigilant for the US-French deal at the time.

However the historic triumph of the Vietnamese people at Dien Bien Phu brought instead the Geneva Conference in search of a peaceful solution of the Indo-Chinese problem. Americans did not reconcile to this development. How could they? After all, Americans had interested themselves

in Indo-China not for offering the olive branch to its people, not for allowing them to shape their destiny freely and in peace. The American aim was to crush the national-liberation movement of these Asian people and foist upon them, if necessary by open war, US bondage.

So, the US imperialists first tried to wreck the work of the Geneva Conference and this was specially seen when they, together with the British, started their moves for setting up an aggressive military bloc in that region which was to culminate in the notorious Manila Treaty of 1954 and its evil offspring, the SEATO. South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia all of which are now open targets of US imperialism, came to be regarded as "protected areas" under this treaty. It is not accidental that Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, all members of the SEATO, are today abettors of US imperialism in its Vietnam war.

India promptly reacted against the SEATO when on September 29, 1954, Jawaharlal Nehru, observed in Lok Sabha:

I have often wondered what was the special urge, the special drive towards having this Manila Conference and this South-East Asia Treaty that emerged from it? What was the sudden fear that brought the countries together—there were some countries together. Was any aggression going to take place? Was the peace of South-East Asia or the Pacific threatened suddenly? Why was this particular time chosen, just after the Geneva Treaty?

Nehru denounced the SEATO not only as "a wrong approach but a dangerous one from the point of view of any Asian country." He understood that it was aimed, among other things, at the Geneva Agreements and hence against peace and freedom of the people of Indo-China. But then those were not the days of funk and servility that characterises the present-day Indian government headed by Nehru's daughter.

US imperialists took a double-faced and utterly dishonest attitude to the Geneva agreements. Although not a signa-

tory to the Agreements, the US government through its representative Bedell-Smith, made a declaration at the concluding session of the 1954 Geneva Conference on July 21 which read:

It (the USA) will refrain from the threat or the use of threat of force to disturb them (agreements) in accordance with Article Two, Section Four of the Charter of the United Nations dealing with the obligation of members to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force; and it would view any renewal of the aggression in violation of the aforesaid Agreements with grave concern and as seriously threatening international peace and security....

But the President of the United States, Eisenhower, struck a different note. He said that "the United States has not itself been a party to, or bound by, the decisions taken at the Conference." The US President evidently had in mind the fact that even as this official commitment to honour the Geneva Agreements was being made, the Yankees were engaged in intervention and war preparations in Vietnam.

Shortly before the Geneva Conference the French were obliged under US pressure to instal an American protege, Ngo Dinh Diem, at the head of the government with Bao Dai as the Chief of State. Diem had lived earlier in the US and was groomed for treachery against his own people. This puppet regime of US-French imperialism was already receiving generous help from the USA but through Paris. After the Geneva Agreements, Ngo Dinh Diem had to withdraw his troops and administrative outfit to the south of the 17th Parallel. Americans began to elbow out their French allies from South Vietnam and to this end they took full advantage of the Geneva Agreements. Under those Agreements, French imperialism withdrew its Expeditionary Corps and disbanded their High Command in Indo-China in 1956. The Americans took the place of the French and, under the cover of training Diem's troops, infiltrated in increasing numbers into South Vietnam. They now

directly gave their aid to Diem and the imperialist overlordship passed from Paris to Washington.

US imperialists not only kept up the facade of the Diem Administration but redoubled their efforts to transform South Vietnam into a regular American base for war against the Vietnamese people. By 1960 the puppet Diem was given about 1600 million dollars, mostly in the form of military aid. American military and other missions swarmed into South Vietnam and the massive military build-up was undertaken. In the name of replacing French arms, US weapons of all kinds were brought in plain violation of Article 17 of the Geneva Agreements. In addition to 2000 American military personnel, the Americans had helped the puppet Diem to have at his disposal a regular army of 150,000 men, civil guard of 60,000 men, security and police of 45,000 and a militia of 100,000 men. By the end of 1960, they had also set up 57 air bases and military airfields for the use of heavy planes.

Arms and war materials flowed into South Vietnam in hundreds of thousands of tons. US military aid to Diem rose from 47,758,000 dollars in 1959 to 74,482,000 dollars in 1960—a clear proof of feverish war preparations. Surprisingly enough India joined with Canada as member of the International Commission of Control and Supervision in Vietnam not only to connive at this illegal introduction of arms in violation of the Geneva Agreements but even went to the length of justifying it. They accepted the plea that the French arms which had been withdrawn could be replaced by American armaments. The third member, Poland, of course dissented and nailed down the violation. South Vietnam's military preparation swallowed 80 per cent of its budget. Needless to say, it was all American military spending. So things went on according to the Dulles Plan of making Asians fight Asians. Hardly the ink on the Geneva Agreements was dry when J. F. Dulles, then US Secretary of States, declared on December 6, 1954:

Politically the USA aims at maintaining and consoli-

dating the Ngo Dinh Diem government; militarily, it aims at building up a better trained, better equipped Vietnamese army.

A year and a half later, the US Assistant Secretary of State W. S. Robertson frankly said that "we are providing budgetary support and equipment for these forces (South Vietnamese) and have a mission in assisting the army." Foreign observers including a British MP noted that but for this massive US aid and support the Diem regime would have collapsed. Having virtually taken over South Vietnam, Americans now took a major political step in furtherance of their aggressive designs.

Under American orders Ngo Dinh Diem founded the so-called "Republic of Vietnam" on October 26, 1955 and later held separate elections for a fake Constituent Assembly. This "Assembly" adopted a "Constitution" for South Vietnam on July 2, 1956, just 18 days before the general elections stipulated by the Geneva Agreements for the reunification of Vietnam. Thus the Americans sabotaged the vital provision of the Agreements and changed the southern zone into a state.

This US-manipulated state now became an instrument in the hands of Americans to launch savage offensive against all patriotic forces in South Vietnam. Reprisals and massacres in open violation of the Geneva Agreements followed. By June 1961 80,000 persons were killed by the minions of the Diem Administration and 275,000 persons were clapped behind prison bars. The South Vietnamese hirelings were used by their Yankee masters to drown in blood the liberation movement in the South as a prelude to the conquest of the North. The world press denounced the terror and repression but that made no impression on Americans or their puppets.

The year 1961 saw the beginning of the undeclared "special war" by the US imperialists in South Vietnam. To prepare for this war a special mission came to South Vietnam from the USA and the result was the criminal Staley

Plan which later came to be known as Staley-Taylor plan. The plan included not only the bloody suppression of all patriotic and democratic forces in South Vietnam but an ultimate offensive against North Vietnam with the object of American conquest of the entire Vietnam.

By the autumn of 1961, the US President was already discussing plans to land openly US troops in South Vietnam. Among those who were despatched to South Vietnam in connection with the Staley Plan were Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs-of-Staff Maxwell Taylor and also Lyndon B. Johnson, then Vice-President of the USA. In November 1961, regular US Army Units began to land in South Vietnam. America's "special war" with "special forces" was now in full swing. In February 1962 a Military Aid Command under General Paul D. Harkins, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the US Land Forces in the Pacific, was set up which left no room for doubt that Yankee imperialists would now be waging openly and directly their war against the freedom-loving Vietnamese people.

The US journal *Newsweek* of April 2, 1962 observed: "The fact is that the American troops in South Vietnam are as close to being at war with the Viet Cong as it is possible to be without any formal declaration of hostilities." The British *New Statesman* of the following March 16 noted: "As the foreign ministers talked this week in Geneva, Americans were fighting an undeclared war in South Vietnam."

As far as Americans were concerned there was nothing left of the Geneva Agreements of 1954. The Geneva document had been torn to pieces and the US imperialists became law unto themselves. Paragraph 4 of the Final Declaration of the 1954 Geneva Conference prohibited "the introduction into Vietnam of foreign troops and military personnel as well as of all kinds of arms and munitions"; paragraph 12 of the same Declaration enjoins that "In their relations with Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, each member of the Geneva Conference undertakes to respect the sovereignty, the independence, the unity and the territorial

integrity of the above mentioned states, and to refrain from any interference in their internal affairs." Moreover, there is also Article 2, Section 4 of the UN Charter which unambiguously lays down: "All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations." All these and their own solemn pledge, as has already been noted, stood specifically and clearly violated by the US aggressors in Vietnam.

This crime against Vietnamese people, the world community and international law has not only been continued but aggravated thereby constituting a grave threat to the security of nations and to world peace. Before World War II, Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese fascists were allowed to defy the covenants of the League of Nations and international law with results that we all know. If Mussolini had been checked in Abyssinia and Hitler in Austria and both of them in Spain, the world would have been spared the terrible holocaust that took a toll of about 40 million human lives. Under the imperialists the League of Nations was then impotent just as today under the US domination the UN helplessly looks on. Yet the US crime in Vietnam is of such magnitude that it should invoke the sternest action by the world community.

AMERICAN BARBARISM IN SOUTH VIETNAM

The "special war" with "special forces" (1961-63) however failed to achieve its objective in the face of the resistance of the patriotic people of South Vietnam led by their National Liberation Front. But that made the American thugs only more vengeful and savage. They now started massive despatch of US troops to South Vietnam. During 1965 alone US troops in South Vietnam rose from 30,000 men to 250,000 men and if we take into account the latest figures including the proposed despatch of another 18,000 men, the strength of US troops in South Vietnam would be over 285,000 men equipped with the most modern wea-

pons and equipments of the mightiest imperialist power. The announced target by the year end is 400,000 US troops. President Johnson and his imperialist junta expect that by the deployment of such massive well-armed forces they would be able to bring the Vietnamese people to their knees. It should be mentioned here that there are about 700,000 puppet troops, all commanded by Americans and equipped with US weapons.

What kind of war is it that these Americans are waging today in Vietnam? We Asians have known many wars and acts of savagery, pillage and rape perpetrated by imperialists on Asian soil. But the Americans have beaten all past bloody records.

During the early days of the "special war," the Americans launched their dastardly "strategic hamlet" policy which meant herding the population into virtual concentration camps by the wholesale burning down of their houses and by the use of other terrorist measures. Ten million South Vietnamese, mostly peasants, were thus driven out of their homes and confined in the 16,000 so-called "strategic hamlets". South Vietnam became a vast prison of the uprooted, tortured men, women and children. Of course 80 per cent of these ghettos of tyranny were later demolished by the National Liberation Front.

The policy of burning and destruction, however, continued on an accelerated scale. The Americans are using napalm bombs that burn everything they touch, poison gas, toxic chemicals to maim and massacre the Vietnamese. By spraying densely populated territories with poison chemicals the US barbarians are killing and poisoning thousands of people. This also causes destruction of crops and vegetation. The US B-52 strategic aircraft unload tens of thousands of bombs on small areas to wipe out the population. By all accounts the US war in South Vietnam is plainly a war of extermination. Hospitals, schools, tuberculosis sanatoria, leprosoria are often targets of the US bombing. For committing such crimes, it should be recalled here, the Nazis were once hanged as war criminals.

According to the information compiled by the National Liberation Front, the US imperialists and their puppet hirelings committed the following crimes between July 1954 and June 1965:

- carried out 160,000 large- and small-scale mopping up operations,
- killed 170,000 people,
- wounded 800,000 people through bombing, machine-gun fire and torture,
- detained 400,000 people in over 1,000 prisons,
- forced millions of people into strategic hamlets,
- kept 2,000,000 children illiterate,
- razed tens of thousands of houses and villages to the ground,
- raped 30,000 women, including old women, children and believers,
- disembowelled or buried alive 5,000 people,
- spread noxious chemicals over 60,000 hectares of tilled land causing great damage to livestock and crops.

Since mid-1965 all these crimes have been intensified. This year the US Defence Secretary Robert McNamara declared that the Yankee imperialists would drop 638,000 tons of bombs on Vietnam during 1966. This quantity is 75 per cent higher than the annual average quantity of bombs Americans dropped in Europe and Africa in the course of World War II. And this is again 40 per cent of the total quantity of bombs used throughout war in the European theatre of military operations. All types of modern weapons in the US arsenal except the nuclear bomb have been pressed into use in America's criminal war in Vietnam. It is reported in the US press that in the new fiscal year (1966-67) 500 million dollars are likely to be allotted in the US budget only for carrying out the bombing, mostly of the civilians, of course, by the strategic B-52 bombers. These bombing raids go on side by side with large-scale "scorched earth" operations by the US and puppet troops. These operations are designed to "kill all, burn all, destroy all" and there is no limit to accompanying cruelties.

In order to intensify and escalate the war in Vietnam the Johnson Administration has asked the US Congress to appropriate 10,500 million dollars for the fiscal year that has now started. This amount is double the figure for 1965-66. There is in addition a demand for another 12,700 million dollars as special expenditure for Vietnam war. In terms of the devalued Indian rupee these come to Rs. 17,400 crores, which is higher than India's entire national income. How brutalised and debased the expeditionary American troops are can be gathered from their individual crimes which include sadistic killings of Vietnamese patriots, open day-light robbery and rape. Tram Kim Thoa, a woman city councillor in Saigon, publicly asked the 250,000 American troops in South Vietnam to bring their prostitutes from outside instead of defiling the country's womanhood. Senator Fulbright, Chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, while addressing the Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, charged that US troops had turned Saigon into an American brothel. "As a result of the American influx," he said, "bar girls, prostitutes, pimps, bar owners and taxi-drivers have risen to the higher levels of the economic pyramids." Of course, the Johnson Administration, which the American lobby in India and our Ministers like Asoka Mehta, S. K. Patil and Subramaniam laud to the sky, is not the least ashamed of this indictment by one of America's top-rung leaders!

With the failure of the "special war" and "Staley-Taylor" Plan, the situation became very critical for the US aggressors and their puppet shows. The puppets were caught in internal crisis and by the end of 1963, the chief American stooge, Ngo Dinh Diem, toppled. Faced with these developments, Americans decided to "carry the war to the North", yet another act of desperation. To get a pretext, the US imperialists engineered on the night of August 4, 1964 the "Tonkin Gulf incident". The next day they launched their first air attacks along the coasts of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Thus was opened a new phase to extend and escalate the US war and aggression.

On February 7, 8 and 11, 1965 the US planes in waves attacked many places in North Vietnam and ever since then these piratical raids are going on. To carry out these raids the US Seventh Fleet (from which the raiders take off) and the American bases around and including those in Thailand are used. The targets are not only industrial centres but ordinary civilian habitations, educational institutions, hospitals, churches, pagodas, etc. They are blowing up dams to flood the country and also the water conservancy installations. They have embarked on an undisguised war of destruction of North Vietnam. After his visit to North Vietnam Ralph Schoeman, Director, Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, wrote:

I arrived in Hanoi on February 21 and travelled in five provinces under heavy bombardment, involving 650 sorties per week, bombs of 1,000 tons, napalm, phosphorous and a fiendish weapon known as "the lazy dog". The lazy dog is a grenade-like bomb containing 250 narrow, long slivers of steel, razor-sharp. Forty of these bombs are contained in one cylinder, making a total of 10,000 slivers. The lazy dog has been dropped continuously on the most heavily populated areas of North Vietnam. The steel slivers act as a machete and rain down on the inhabitants, slicing all in their path. It is incredible to realise that in Thanh Hoa province alone, 10,000 bombs have fallen, showering a total of 100 million slivers of steel on one province in the centre of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

According to the figures available in Saigon the US and puppet Air Force carried out between February 7 and November 18, 1965 over 3,000 raids over North Vietnam. Tens of thousands of bombs were dropped. Like other criminal ventures, these too have failed. "The President's strategy," says the *New York Herald Tribune*, "had already failed, because the North Vietnamese Communists did not run for cover the moment the first bombs dropped on their territory." Commenting on the US policy of "escalation"

the *New York Times* of December 4, 1965 had to admit, "Escalation up to now has failed. More escalation is just as likely to fail, and bring with it the gravest and widest danger." The American journal the *Christian Science Monitor* pronounced Johnson's escalation policy as "unsuccessful in all respects." The failure, however, has made the American rulers only more senseless, more inhuman and more aggressive.

So that the whole of Indo-China is drawn into this US war, the US imperialists have been carrying out bombing raids on Laos. Last year the US Air Force carried out up to 300 sorties daily on Laos, dropping nearly 1,000 bombs and rockets. Many houses were destroyed and many civilians killed. In April-May this year B-52 Jets carried out seven bombing missions on Laos. The rightists in that country are instigated to attack Pathet Laos. In Laos there are over 5,000 US military personnel and "advisers" in addition to 400 Filipinos, 300 Japanese and 600 Kuomintang hirelings who have been sent there by Americans. Americans are constantly threatening Cambodia and using the Thai troops there to pressurise Prince Sihanouk and his country. On orders from their American masters the Thai government is repeatedly violating the Cambodian borders.

Crimes and barbarities of the US imperialists in Vietnam have shocked human conscience. They are rightly compared with Hitler's war crimes and this has led world public men like Bertrand Russell, Professor Linus Pauling, Wier Christian Geishler to demand the trial of the leaders of the US Government by an international court for war crimes just as the Nazis once were tried at Nuremberg.

It is an irony that the disciples of Gandhiji—as they claim themselves to be—now in control of the Indian government or ensconced in the leadership of the ruling Congress party have chosen the line of studied silence over the US crimes in Vietnam. Yet India is one country with traditions of respect for human values, of Asian fellowship and of anti-imperialism that is expected to raise her voice against US brutality and barbarism. When a few years ago

the Portuguese rulers committed some police atrocities against our Goan compatriots the Congress rulers wanted—and very justly so—the world to protest. Among those who were then with us were the Vietnamese. So is it any surprise if many in this wide world are literally baffled at the silence of the Indian ruling circles at the shocking, unthinkable US crimes in Vietnam? Would Gandhiji have kept quiet? This is not so much a question—for we know the answer—as a challenge to the conscience of those who have permitted their lips to be sealed and, along with the Indian rupee, also their soul and conscience to be devalued!

EPIC RESISTANCE

By their glorious resistance for national salvation the Vietnamese people have written a golden page in history. South Vietnam's patriotic war against the US aggressors is a symbol of matchless heroism and death-defying courage. When the US imperialists first started their adventure twelve years ago they thought that the Vietnamese people, backward in a material sense, poor, suffering and lacking in modern weapons could easily be beaten and enslaved. The Yankees never realised they would be faced with a proud and brave people who would rather face death to the last man than surrender their honour and their right to live as a free, peace-loving nation. The aggressors did not take into account the spirit of resistance that the fight for the freedom of one's fatherland, especially when led by the working people, gives rise to. The US rulers thought that with their dollars to bribe and their weapons to kill they could silence the Vietnamese.

But right from the very start of their intervention Americans met with stubborn resistance. Neither public guillotines with which the American lackeys and executioners studded the country nor the fascist law 10/59 outlawing the patriotic Vietnamese people and all their organisations that opposed Americans, nor inhuman tortures broke the spirit of resistance. On the contrary, in December 1960

was founded the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation, rallying and uniting all sections of the South Vietnamese people. This Front today leads the resistance and patriotic war and is delivering blow after blow at the US marauders and their despicable band of traitors to the nation. At the beginning the South Vietnamese fought with almost bare hands but today they do possess weapons. The chief suppliers of their weapons are the Americans themselves and their puppets who are suffering heavy defeats at the hands of the Liberation Forces.

The liberated area under the National Front for Liberation now covers four-fifths of the entire territory of South Vietnam and 10 million out of its 14 million total population. And even in the one-fifth enemy-held territory Americans and their puppet Ky gang sit on a volcano as has been recently seen by the Buddhist uprisings in La Dang, Hue and even in Saigon. All impartial foreign observers are agreed on one point, namely that the puppets would not last a single moment if the American troops are withdrawn. The area is literally under American occupation. As early as 1957, during his visit to the USA the puppet Dr. Ngo Dinh Diem said that "the US border extends to the 17th parallel."

The National Liberation Front dealt smashing blows to the Americans in their "special war" in the early days as they are now doing with McNamara's unlimited war. The military exploits of the Front are a thrilling saga of heroism that is impossible to recount within the space of this publication. The fact that President Johnson has had to employ nearly 300,000 US troops is enough evidence of what stuff the Vietnamese freedom fighters are made of. No other proof is needed.

The US losses in 1963 were 700 men, in 1965 it was 20,000. During the first quarter of this year the Liberation Forces and people of South Vietnam put out of action 67,000 enemy troops which included 27,000 from the US and its satellite countries. About 1150 aircraft (June end, 1966) were shot down or destroyed, 30 warships were set on fire

or sunk. In 1963, the Liberation Forces could annihilate only companies and now the striking power of these freedom fighters is such that they can smash several battalions with a single blow and thrust large-scale offensive even into the enemy-held towns. Last year the Liberation Forces won many historic victories beginning with the one in Van Tuong on August 18.

The hopes of the US aggressors of success during the dry season have since been shattered. In 70 days (January 1 to March 10) this year in Central Vietnam alone 25,760 enemy troops including 9320 Yankees were wiped out and 453 aircraft shot down or destroyed. During 1965, the enemy casualties were 227,500 of whom 19,200 were American troops. These victories are extremely significant both politically and militarily. For they show that the South Vietnamese people led by their Liberation Front are now in a solid position to beat back and defeat the US aggressors and their puppet troops. There is yet another noteworthy feature of the war in South Vietnam. The bigger the US force, the greater is the resistance and stronger the National Liberation Front!

The Vietnamese people are with the National Liberation Front which indeed is their only genuine representative. Not to recognise this outstanding fact is to completely ignore the reality. Not only are the people rallied behind the Front but they are prepared to make any sacrifice under its leadership. From the Indian press under the control of monopolists, little is known about the fact that despite all this metal and fire of war in South Vietnam, a new life is being built in the liberated South Vietnam on the basis of the programme of the National Liberation Front. 2,500,000 hectares of land have been distributed to peasants. The National Liberation Front fulfils the functions of organs of power in the remaking of life as in the conduct of the sacred liberation war. The aim of the "programme is to shake off the yoke of US imperialism and henchmen, achieve independence, democracy, peace and neutrality of

South Vietnam and progress towards peaceful reunification of the Fatherland."

The US bombing raids of North Vietnam have proved to be equally costly to the US imperialists. Far from being intimidated by these savage raids, the Armed Forces and the people of North Vietnam have shot down well over 900 modern American aircraft. The myth of the irresistible "air superiority" to subjugate North Vietnam has already been exploded. Many foreign observers have gone on record to tell the world that even in the face of these recurrent heavy air attacks great advance is being achieved in industry, agriculture and in all spheres of life in the unconquerable Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

VIETNAM WANTS PEACE—NOT WAR

The Vietnamese people have been in the midst of war for the past twenty years including the twelve years against the most powerful and vicious foe of national liberation—the US imperialists. Naturally, the Vietnamese people ardently desire peace. Of course, they want not the peace of the graveyard but of a self-respecting, free people. This war they did not want but it has been forced upon them by the aggressive US imperialism. In the eyes of US imperialism the Vietnamese with their 2300 years history as a people, have no right except under the American neo-colonialist tutelage. This the Vietnamese have made abundantly clear is never going to happen, whatever the sacrifice and suffering. "Even if we are to carry out the struggle for 10, 20 years longer", says the South Vietnam Liberation Front, "and have to suffer greater difficulties and hardships, we are prepared and resolved to fight and fight to the end until not a single US soldier is seen in our country."

The US imperialists are trying to hoodwink the world by their so-called 14-point proposals and other clumsy "peace" manoeuvres. But these are today exposed as a mere cover for intensifying and escalating the war of aggression. President Johnson's 14-point plan made public

last December, is essentially a plan for maintaining a puppet regime in South Vietnam and perpetuating the partition of Vietnam. That explains why, while making a fake show of "peace efforts" Johnson and the Pentagon were sending more and more American troops to South Vietnam and were also stepping up all their barbarous aggressive actions. Even Cambodia and Laos are now under increasing attacks and provocation.

In his Baltimore Address on April 7, 1965 President Johnson, in typical Hitlerite style, declared, "We now find it necessary to say with guns and planes. We will use all our powers...." On January 12, this year Johnson told the world that it was the policy of the US not to pull out of South Vietnam and asked the Vietnamese people to surrender in effect in the name of "unconditional negotiations". If it is actions that matter, Americans have left no doubt that unless the Vietnamese and the world people force them out of this "dirty war", Johnson and Co. is not of their own accord going to end their foul adventure, which the Secretary-General of the UNO—U Thant, has been obliged to call "barbarous".

The Vietnamese people however want an end to the war and seek peace not by dictating their own terms but on the basis of the faithful implementation of the Geneva Agreements of 1954. This unmistakably stands out in the famous four-point proposal of the Government of Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The proposal, which has the full support of the South Vietnam Liberation Front and also corresponds to the latter's five-point plan, is as follows:

1. Recognition of the basic national rights of the Vietnamese people: Peace, independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. According to the Geneva Agreements, the US government must withdraw from South Vietnam all its troops, military personnel and weapons of all kinds, dismantle all US military bases there, cancel its "military alliance" with South Vietnam. It must end its policy of intervention and aggression in South Viet-

nam. According to the Geneva Agreements, the US Government must stop its acts of war against North Vietnam; completely cease all encroachments on the territory and sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

2. Pending the peaceful reunification of Vietnam, while Vietnam is still temporarily divided into two zones, the military provisions of the 1964 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam must be strictly respected: the two zones must refrain from joining any military alliance with foreign countries. There must be no foreign military bases, troops and military personnel in their respective territories.

3. The internal affairs of South Vietnam must be settled by the South Vietnamese people themselves, in accordance with the programme of the South Vietnam National Front for Liberation, without any foreign interference.

4. The peaceful reunification of Vietnam is to be settled by the Vietnamese people in both zones themselves, without any foreign interference.

But the US imperialists would have nothing to do with the Geneva Agreements which they have trampled under foot all these years. Let it be said here that the international community owes it to itself to compel the Johnson Administration to respect the Geneva Agreements, the UN Charter and the time-honoured standards of international behaviour. This is the only way how other nations can really contribute to peace in the war-torn, bleeding Vietnam.

WORLD PEOPLE SUPPORT

The sacred struggle of the Vietnamese people has won the unstinted support of all genuine peace and freedom-loving forces in the world. In fact, the cause of Vietnam has given rise to a worldwide upsurge of sympathy, support and solidarity and the United States is no exception to it. Never have the US imperialists been so despised and so isolated abroad and at home as they are today. The re-

nowned American columnist Walter Lippmann, rightly has observed that the present US Vietnam policy has led to a serious crisis in Washington's entire foreign policy. Former US Ambassador in India Prof. Galbraith describes the state of affairs as "rigor mortis".

The greatest moral, political and material support to the Vietnamese people naturally comes from the socialist countries, notably the Soviet Union. In their message to the Soviet Union on the occasion of the 48th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, Ho Chi Minh and other Vietnamese leaders said that, "...in the struggle against the imperialist aggressors of the United States, in defence of the North, for the liberation of the South and peaceful unification of their country they also enjoy tremendous and valuable sympathies and support and assistance on the part of the Soviet people, the CPSU and the Government of the USSR." Knowledgeable observers will not miss the fact that from the Soviet Union the Vietnamese people are receiving even more than what they ask for. Deep sentiments of gratitude for the Soviet help have been again and again expressed by the leaders of the South Vietnam Liberation Front.

Among the newly free non-aligned states the United Arab Republic, Algeria, Syria, Guinea, Mali, Burma have lent their support to the Vietnamese cause. In May last President Nasser denounced the US war in Vietnam as "horrible aggression" that had "disturbed the conscience all over the world and even in the United States itself." Nasser praised the Vietnamese people's struggle in glowing terms. Unfortunately, the largest non-aligned country—India—is however out of step with the UAR and others over this burning question.

People in all continents and in all countries are increasingly rallying to the support of the Vietnamese cause and against the predatory war of the US imperialists. In Britain, France, Italy, Australia, Finland and other European countries powerful solidarity movements with the Vietnamese exist and are growing. In Britain, for example, many trade

unions have denounced the US Vietnam policy. About 100 members of the British Parliament belonging to the ruling Labour Party signed a motion opposing the Labour government's support to the US aggression in Vietnam. In France, popular resentment is universal and is reflected in President de Gaulle's open disapproval of Washington's bellicosity and aggression. As a matter of fact, the Vietnam policy of the United States has contributed to the growing crisis within the NATO bloc.

Within the United States more and more people from all walks of public life including the Congressional circles are coming forward to repudiate the Johnson Administration's aggressive and costly war in Vietnam. Workers, students, teachers and intellectuals in different parts of the USA have held open demonstrations in protest against Johnson's policy, the anti-draft movement as well as the burning of draft cards being one defiant if symbolic form. The Committee of Veterans of Peace in Vietnam has declared: "We are veterans who fought in many battle-fronts in four wars. We see no just cause in our intervention in Vietnam". 50,000 Americans of all strata from 43 states for example, took part in the "March on Washington for Peace in Vietnam" on November 27, 1965. 10,000 students and teachers, of 40 US universities and colleges demonstrated on November 20 in Oakland on Vietnam issue. In this connection the noble sacrifices of Mrs. Helga Hertz, Morrison, Robert Laporte and Mrs. Jankowski will never be forgotten.

In the Latin American countries as in Afro-Asian countries people's voice against US imperialism's Vietnam war is daily becoming louder. In Japan massive demonstrations have been held in support of the Vietnamese people. The Japanese Socialist Party in Parliament has called upon their government to ask Americans to stop the bombing of North Vietnam and other bestialities. All over the world communists and anti-imperialists are naturally in the forefront.

In India little however is known about this worldwide popular movement against America's Vietnam war because the monopoly press, in its worship of the dollar, has chosen

to black-out all such news, while spreading all kinds of distortions and lies about Vietnam's unassailably just liberation war—a war that, in the final analysis, is no less a defence of India's own peace and security.

VIETNAM AND INDIA

Along with Vietnam India shared colonial bondage. The age-long kinship between the Vietnamese and Indian peoples grew stronger and assumed profound significance in the common struggles against colonialism and imperialism. Both the peoples won their freedom in the wake of the historic anti-imperialist upsurge following World War II. Down the ages of history the people of Indo-China with whom India had many intimate ties long before the advent of the West on Asian soil looked upon this land of ours with profound understanding and affection.

All this naturally gives rise to mutual obligations for the well-being of the two peoples. One is called upon to stand by the other not only in upholding the indissoluble bonds of the past but in shaping the present and the future. These sublime brotherly obligations have all along been acknowledged in our country.

Coming to modern times, it will be recalled that an Indo-Chinese national leader joined with Jawaharlal Nehru in the League of Oppressed Peoples at Brussels—called the League against Imperialism in 1927. Two years later he came as a guest of honour to the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress. The Congress in those days always championed the liberation of the entire South-East Asia from colonial slavery, whether British, Dutch or French. In its resolution of December 1945 the Congress Working Committee said:

Any support from any quarter to imperialist designs in Indonesia, Indo-China and elsewhere is resented throughout Asia as culpable violation of the professed aims of the United Nations and the undeniable right of Asian nationals. This will destroy the chance of international

understanding and the very basis of any future world organisation. The Committee regret that the United States of America have by their passive attitude encouraged these imperialist aggressions. While expressing their heartfelt sympathy with the Indonesian and Indo-Chinese nationalists for the enormous loss and suffering inflicted upon them by the imperialist powers, this Committee are particularly distressed to find the units of the Indian army arrayed against the Indonesians and Indo-Chinese and view with deep indignation this mischievous misuse of the Indian forces by the British government.

Nehru came out in powerful condemnation of British imperialism which was then actively supporting France in suppressing Indo-Chinese freedom struggle. He said in December 1945: "...we have watched British intervention there with growing anger, shame and helplessness that Indian troops should be used for doing Britain's dirty work against our friends who are fighting the same fight as we... Our hearts are with Indo-China. The attempts to crush the spirit of freedom in Indo-China have deeply moved the Indian people." The President of the Congress Maulana Azad warned France. Incidentally, these words stand in tragic contrast to what Indira Gandhi is saying today.

All India was roaring in protest against the French and the British for their aggressive adventures in Vietnam to suppress the revolutionary national resurgence. In Calcutta at the beginning of 1946 there were turbulent demonstrations by the students, workers and others in which the police forces of the British were attacked and British properties burnt. These anti-imperialist solidarity actions were met by wanton police firings which killed two students and injured many others. That was how our people in those days vented their feelings against imperialist intervention in Vietnam and in support of its people.

In March-April 1947 the Asian Relations Conference was held in Delhi. The Conference was attended by a special representative of Ho Chi Minh. After the Conference the

Interim Government at Nehru's initiative imposed restrictions on all overflights by French aircraft carrying arms and ammunition to Indo-China. The Congress then passed a resolution asking the government to send a Mission to Vietnam.

And what is happening now when the US imperialists are carrying their barbarous war against the Vietnamese people? Compared to the crimes of Americans, the Anglo-French actions of the late forties would seem just a flea-bite. Yet, free India is in a far better position to render help to the Vietnamese, and to stop this US war on Asian soil.

Because India under Nehru broadly sympathised with the cause of Vietnam, then fighting against the French, she could play an important role in bringing about the Geneva Conference and, ensuring its success even without being a participant. India was chosen as the Chairman of the International Commission of Supervision and Control under the Geneva accords for ensuring their implementation. It was a great trust reposed in our country. The honour came to India because of our people's anti-imperialist traditions and their devotion to the cause of national liberation.

Where does India stand today? Not that there were no vacillations and false steps during Nehru's time. For example, it was a great folly on the part of India to have endorsed along with Canada in 1958 the replacement of the French armaments which had been withdrawn by introduction of foreign arms from the United States. This violated, as the Polish representative on the ICC at once pointed out, Article 77 of the Geneva Agreements. Incidentally, commenting on the Indian action, *New Age* (July 6), central organ of the CPI, editorially said:

The Indian people must firmly and persistently ask the Indian government the reasons which led the Indian Chairman of the Commission to betray his moral and

legal responsibility. Is this black deed the price for getting US aid and dollar loans?

However, India was still playing a constructive role. In the early years of the Geneva Agreements the Indian government did not at least hesitate to disapprove of the manifest aggressive actions of the US imperialists although special care was always taken in choosing the words for the purpose.

When Ho Chi Minh visited India in February 1958, Jawaharlal Nehru not only paid high tributes to the Vietnamese leader by welcoming him as a "piece of history" but issued a memorable Joint Statement on February 13 in which the Vietnamese people and the whole world were told:

The President and the Prime Minister agreed that colonialism and forcible occupation or domination of national territories by foreign powers have no place in the world today. They expressed deep sympathy for all peoples struggling for independence and sovereignty. They were glad that a number of countries in Asia and Africa had achieved independence....

The Joint Statement of the two leaders emphasised peace in Vietnam "on the basis of the fulfilment of the Geneva Agreements on Vietnam." The meaning of these solemn words in the context of Vietnam does not need explanation.

It must however be admitted that even during Nehru's time the pressure of US imperialists on India's Vietnam policy was being felt. But there was no major slide-back. Then the Indian government began to increasingly equivocate on the open US intervention and aggression in Vietnam and there were visible attempts on India's part to evade responsibilities as the Chairman of the ICC. On occasions India even sided with Canada in the Commission to make things easy for Americans. The tendency to equate the aggressor with the aggressed, the just war of resistance and liberation with the unjust war of conquest, the

imperialists with those whom they want to enslave, was growing.

And with the India-China border fighting in the autumn of 1962 the US manoeuvres to distort and paralyse India's role over Vietnam seemed to produce encouraging results for Washington. There was an open imperialist drive now to denigrate the policy of non-alignment and emasculate in particular its anti-imperialist content. India's increasing dependence on the United States for food and economic "aid" was to offer a grand opportunity for the US pressure and blackmail on the Indian government.

After Nehru's death Americans and their friends became very active in their attempts to force India to shift from the policy of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism. In point of time this more or less coincided with the preparations for large-scale US interventions and aggression in Vietnam.

But all this did not however yet succeed in preventing the Indian government from publicly deploring the US bombing of the North Vietnam.

Referring to President Johnson's "peace" overtures Lal Bahadur Shastri said in April 1965: "There is hardly any point in the offer he (Johnson) made. The first thing is that the bombing must stop." But this categorical demand was soon qualified by equating the US bombing with certain imaginary actions by North Vietnam. This was in line with the unprincipled and equivocal stand of the government which was already taking a definite shape. For in February the same year the government had spoken thus even in connection with the bombing: "It is obvious that in Vietnam one thing has led to another and there has been interference from many quarters. The Government of India considers that, as a first step, there should be an immediate suspension of all provocative acts in South Vietnam as well as in North Vietnam by all sides involved in the Vietnam situation."

Yet the plain issue was that the US imperialists alone were bombing another state in violation of the UN Charter and the Geneva Agreements and as such deserved to be

condemned and called to order. There was no question here of "all sides" or of "the North as well". Victims of naked aggression certainly did not fall in the same category with the aggressor! In the Report of the Ministry of External Affairs for 1965-66, the demands for the stopping of bombing and for the withdrawal of the American forces from South Vietnam have been voiced. But in practice the retreat from this stand had begun in the latter half of the year. It is well known how the Minister for External Affairs Sardar Swaran Singh wanted to wriggle out of even this stated position when Americans created a hullabaloo over what the Report had said.

This wavering attitude continued during the brief tenure of Lal Bahadur's premiership. While in the Joint Communique on his visit to the Soviet Union in May 1965, he agreed with his Soviet hosts that the bombing of the North Vietnam should be immediately stopped, he later waived this precondition in the Joint Communique on his talks with the Canadian Prime Minister in June. The Communique called for "unconditional negotiations" and on the part of India this sounded rather odd when the Indian government had refused a similar Chinese proposal of talks without any precondition and was still insisting on China's acceptance in toto of the Colombo proposals before any talks between India and China.

Three days later (June 17), the Statement of Guidance for the Commonwealth Premiers which had been drawn up with the full approval of the Indian Prime Minister asked for "a North Vietnamese undertaking to prevent the movement of any military forces or assistance or material to South Vietnam."

Then came the August Joint Communique on the talks between the Indian Prime Minister Shastri and the Yugoslav President Tito which demanded a unilateral end to the bombing of North Vietnam and participation of the National Liberation Front in a conference of the parties concerned. This is perhaps the first time that the Liberation Front was so mentioned.

The above facts would show that the Indian government had virtually lost its grip over the Vietnam question in the face of imperialist pressures. Americans further keyed up their tactics with New Delhi so that India could be at least completely neutralised over Vietnam if any direct involvement on the side of the United States would still not be possible. The hold-up of the promised American aid and the calculated avoidance of any definite commitment in regard to PL 480 food supplies were plainly meant to make India's ruling circles more accommodating towards Washington. It was made plain that if India took any bold stand on Vietnam, the US sources of "aid" and food would dry up with the Government of India having to face extremely serious economic and political consequences.

At the beginning of February, President Johnson met the South Vietnamese puppets Thieu and Ky at Honolulu and drew up their new plans against the Vietnamese people and for the escalation of the war. There was however a lot of sugar-coating to make the conspiracy look innocent. Immediately after the Honolulu conference the US Vice-President landed in Delhi in the middle of February to discuss the Honolulu decisions with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and other leading men of her government. It was no state secret that one of the reasons why Humphrey came was to ask the Indian government to give some form of direct support to Americans in Vietnam. The proposal for an Indian medical mission to South Vietnam was taken up. The fact that Humphrey could dare make any preposterous proposal for India's joining with Americans in Vietnam was in itself an evidence of a good deal of groundwork having been done by Americans and their lobby-men here.

There was not the slightest indication that the Indian government at all tried to impress upon Humphrey the need to respect the Geneva Agreements or stop the US crimes in Vietnam. There was of course no disapproval of the Honolulu meet whereas the communique on the conference itself announced: "There was a full discussion of

the military situation and of the military plans and programmes."

It is now revealed that TELCO was already sending trucks to South Vietnam for the use of Americans and their puppets in the war against the Vietnamese people. Indian Oxygen Ltd. is reported to be exporting goods of strategic importance to South Vietnam perhaps for gas war. In passing it should also be mentioned here that when the All-India Youth Federation wanted to send an unofficial mission of 25 doctors to the bombed North Vietnam last year the youth organisation was advised to drop the idea.

However, after Indira Gandhi's assumption of the leadership of the government even the most feeble public protests by the government against the US bombing raids on North Vietnam completely stopped.

The dishonorable retreat from India's past stand on Vietnam got completely exposed during Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit to the USA last March. The insult to India by the peremptory cancellation by Johnson of Lal Bahadur Shastri's scheduled visit to the United States was still fresh in public memory. Americans had done this because they were angry with his public criticism of the US bombing of North Vietnam. To drive the insult home it was made known that the President could not receive the Indian leader at that time on account of his preoccupations with the Vietnam war.

It is only when the escalation policy led to great isolation of President Johnson both nationally and in the international arena that Washington returned to a hospitable mood to receive Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Even then they would not withdraw the ban on the committed economic aid for the Third Plan. Under these circumstances the appearance of Indira Gandhi in Washington itself was a disgraceful act. The results of her confabulations with President Johnson and other American big-wigs tarnished India's name as they immensely pleased the American imperialists and the killers of the Vietnamese people. The Indian Prime Minister received a terrific boost in the US

press, television and radio, the like of which even her illustrious father rarely got.

The Joint Communique issued on the Johnson-Indira talks revealed how the US President went about his business. The communique said: "...In this connection the President explained the policies the United States is pursuing to help the people of the Republic of Vietnam to defend their freedom and reconstruct their war-torn society..." Only a few weeks ago on January 12, President Johnson had announced that US would further strengthen its forces in South Vietnam. On the following January 17, the US Defence Secretary McNamara disclosed that Johnson had decided to sanction 12,300 million dollars more and send 113,000 more US troops to South Vietnam. Both the US statements and deeds that followed were wholly along this line of intensified aggression in Vietnam.

All that the Indian Prime Minister did, according to the Joint Communique, was to explain to the US President "the continuing interest and effort of her country in bringing about a just and peaceful solution of this problem." There was no indication of any concern even at the US bombing of North Vietnam in this platitudinous ambiguity on the part of the Indian Prime Minister. The Geneva Agreements were of course totally forgotten in the presence of the mighty US President.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi later said that she had been "impressed by the sincerity of President's desire for a peaceful settlement in that war torn country." When asked in Rajya Sabha on April 7 if she appreciated the American stand on Vietnam, the Prime Minister's reply was that "...I appreciated President Johnson's desire to have peace there and he had made an effort for it." One could not imagine more fantastic nonsense than this. And this certificate to the greatest warmonger and aggressor was given at a moment when the people all over the world, including the United States, were denouncing Johnson's Vietnam policy.

At India's cost the US President tried to snatch a great

political and diplomatic victory out of his talks with the appeasing Indian Prime Minister. No other leader of any non-aligned country had even thought of issuing such good conduct certificate to the man currently engaged in crimes that moved thinkers and humanists like Bertrand Russell, as has been said earlier, to demand his trial as a war criminal. The statement was a breach of faith with India's solemn commitments under the Geneva Agreements and was a rude blow to the principles of non-alignment, not to speak of anti-imperialism. But the debasement did not end there.

The so-called US policy of "containment of communism" is too notorious to need any reiteration. Nehru never associated himself with that policy. Sometimes he even publicly deprecated it. It will be remembered even in those tense, exciting days of October-November 1962, Nehru said in Parliament that India's conflict with China had nothing to do with the ideology of communism. But his daughter, now India's Prime Minister, practically fell in for the "containment policy" when she said, chiming in with the imperialists, that China's threat was more political than military. And in the charmed company of Johnson she directly joined with the US imperialists in declaring in the communique that "The Prime Minister and the President agreed such aggressive policies (of China) pose a threat to peace, particularly in Asia."

India has certainly her problems with China as well as her grounds for complaint. However, for a head of the government of a country which is supposed to be non-aligned, anti-colonial, anti-imperialist and peace-loving to declare that China and not US imperialism is a threat to peace in Asia is downright renegacy. It is playing the game of the US State Department. The enormity would seem all the more reprehensible in view of the praise she showered on President Johnson. 250,000 American GIs in Vietnam were all sentinels of peace of the world and of Asia's security!

It will be recalled that between 1956 and 1964, six Joint

Communiqués were issued either in Washington or in Delhi on the talks in which the President, Prime Minister and Defence Minister of India on the one hand, and the US President, Vice-President and Defence Secretary on the other variously participated. None of these communiqués went to the length of the communiqué on the Indira-Johnson talks—not even the communiqué which was issued in Washington eight months after the India-China border fighting on the talks between President Radhakrishnan and President Kennedy. That communiqué did not go beyond showing “defensive concern to thwart the designs of Chinese aggression against this subcontinent.” Even in those days of high tension India did not speak of “threat to peace, particularly in Asia,” from China.

From her close association with Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi should have known that US imperialists like the Baldwins and Hitlers of the past use the bogey of communist countries to divide anti-imperialist and freedom-loving forces to make colonial conquests and colonial domination easier. After the India-China conflict the US imperialists have particularly pursued this rotten tactic with India.

The India-China question has been insidiously linked up with the US strategy in Asia, particularly in regard to Vietnam. It is contended by imperialists and reactionaries in India that Americans are waging their war in Vietnam to contain China and that India which is “threatened by China” is benefited by this US war. This is how even otherwise well-meaning people are sometimes softened, if not silenced, over this question of Vietnam. Thus Americans are trying to exploit both anti-communism among some political circles in India as well as ill-informed narrow nationalistic sentiments among others to get away with their villainy and crimes. But the truth is difficult to hide.

The US imperialists joined their French allies in the mid-forties in starting the war to reconquer Indo-China. The US rulers gave lavish help to the French colonialists and the amount was around 400 million dollars annually.

At that time there was no "Communist China" and the US lackey Chiang Kai-shek was still in power in China. That Americans entered the Vietnam scene with the object of taking over the colonial possessions from the French and getting a foothold in that strategic region for pushing ahead America's neo-colonialism and for intimidating and subjugating the Asian peoples was no secret. *The New York Times* of February 12, 1950 wrote: "Indo-China is a prize worth a large gamble. In the North are exportable tin, tungsten, zinc, manganese, coal, lumber and rice; and in the South are rice, rubber, tea, pepper, cattle and hides. Before the war (i.e. World War II) Indo-China yielded dividends estimated from 250 million dollars to 300 million dollars to French interests."

Then came the frank statement from the US President Eisenhower himself who revealed the real design of US imperialism in Vietnam at a Governors' Conference on August 4, 1953 and said:

Now let us assume we lost Indo-China. If Indo-China goes, several things happen right away. The peninsula, the last bit of land hanging on down here, would be scarcely defensible. The tin and tungsten that we so greatly value from that area would cease coming. So, when the United States votes 400 million dollars to help that war (the war that was being launched by French imperialism against the people of Indo-China at that time) we are not voting a give away programme. We are voting for the cheapest way that we can to prevent the occurrence of something that would be of a most terrible significance to the United States of America, our security, our power and ability to get certain things we need from the riches of the Indo-Chinese territory and from South-East Asia.

Should there be any doubt after all this what the US imperialists are up to in Vietnam and in other parts of Asia? Should they be permitted to cover their real designs

by playing on anti-communist prejudices or by exploiting the tragic India-China conflict?

Unfortunately, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi allowed herself to be trapped and the consequence may prove, unless the situation is retrieved, disastrous. After all Americans are not going to stop in Vietnam, nor is their economic aggression in India in the form of the dictated devaluation without still more sinister undisclosed motives. Let it not be thought that the intensified economic offensive against India and the aggression of US military operation in Vietnam are unconnected events. Far from being so, they are the two prongs of the same neo-colonialist drive of US imperialism. Vietnam is only the front-line, the long-term strategic aim is all Asia.

Even after so much open back-stepping Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Foreign Minister Swaran Singh would still claim that there has been no change in India's policy in regard to Vietnam. But they do not define what the present policy exactly is but only repeat the mantram that India stands for peace in Vietnam. Even President Johnson, while doing everything to intensify and escalate the war, puts out some "peace overtures". Neither hypocritical "peace overtures" nor any pious wish can bring peace in Vietnam today. The key to peace lies in compelling the US aggressors who have no business at all to be there to stop the aggression and withdraw from this Asian country.

There was a time when India's policy was in line with the requirements of the Geneva Agreements, notwithstanding occasional vacillations and inconsistencies. Today, the chasm between the two is too glaring to be missed.

First, there is no forthright denunciation of the bombing of North Vietnam while the Geneva Agreements, the UN Charter and India's professed mission in world affairs demand the strongest condemnation of US crimes.

Secondly, the demand for the withdrawal of US troops and for the abolition of US bases in South Vietnam has also been given up and the aggression there is treated more and more as a dispute. The Indian government asks

others to take the presence of US expeditionary forces in Vietnam as a "reality" while remaining silent on the fact that this so-called "reality" is nothing but a major aggression and a bid for colonial domination.

Thirdly, there is a growing tendency in India's ruling circles not only to equate the aggressor and the victim but blame the South Vietnam Liberation Front and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. This is what is implied, for example, when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi showers praise on President Johnson's "sincere desire for peace". This eulogy was only to be rewarded by heavy bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong.

Fourthly, there is no condemnation of the intensification of the war by Americans or of their wholly illegal arms build-up and transportation of US troops—all of which are monstrous violations of the Geneva Agreements. Lately the Indian Prime Minister has made another wonderful discovery. She says that it is difficult for Americans to get out of Vietnam. Such fatuity would seem incomprehensible even to Americans. In the latest gallop-poll in the United States the sentiments for withdrawal have swelled and every three Americans against four are insisting on the demand for the withdrawal of US troops. Only one American against six expects a US victory. The present policy of the government accords to the US troops in South Vietnam a locus standi and provides an alibi for Johnson. The only status they deserve is that of aggressors and criminals under international law.

Fifthly, the role of the representative of the Indian government, who is the Chairman of the International Commission of Supervision and Control, now amounts to a clear dereliction of duties under the Geneva Agreements. He has not even thought it fit to tell the world about the quantum of arms Americans have introduced in Vietnam in defiance of the Geneva accords. For this tragic fate of the Geneva Agreements the Indian Chairman's responsibility is not small.

Sixthly, under these circumstances, the vague talk of a

political settlement on the part of the Indian government is not only devoid of any positive substance but it plays into American hands.

It does not require to be said that India's present Vietnam policy militates against all her traditions of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism as also against India's professions of peace and freedom. India's image stands tarnished at the hands of the Congress rulers. The explanation for this fall from high ideals lies in the fact that the Government of India has chosen to barter away our nation's cherished ideals for US dollars.

US imperialists know that India is not Thailand or Philippines to be openly or actively ranged on the side of Washington in the Vietnam war. So their line has always been first to obstruct and limit India's positive role in regard to Vietnam and then to silence our country. Of course, they have sought some token involvement of this country by India's physical presence in Vietnam in the form, for instance, of a medical mission. To the misfortune of all Asia and indeed the entire peace-loving humanity, Americans have achieved considerable success in their foul manoeuvres to spike India's assigned role.

In this connection one's mind cannot help going back to the past. In the thirties Poet Tagore wrote the memorable letter to a Japanese powerfully denouncing Japan's aggression in China. It was Jawaharlal Nehru who organised and sent a medical mission to China as a symbol of our people's solidarity with Chinese in their struggle against the Japanese invaders. When Mussolini landed his troops in Abyssinia the voice of India was at once raised against the aggression. Notwithstanding his preoccupations with our freedom movement Jawaharlal Nehru went to the front-lines of the Spanish Civil War to express India's solidarity with the Spanish Republic which was then fighting the fascist aggression engineered and equipped by Hitler and Mussolini. Nehru disdainfully rejected Mussolini's invitation to meet him.

From the forums of the Congress in those days time and

again India's voice was heard against imperialist aggression. When India's freedom was ushered in in 1947 Nehru and other Congress leaders solemnly pledged that free India would not rest until every Asian people is free or imperialism is made a thing of the past in Asian soil. At the historic Bandung Conference in 1955 Jawaharlal Nehru spoke thus:

But, there is yet another spirit of Asia today. As we all know, Asia is no longer passive today; it had been passive enough in the past. It is no more a submissive Asia; it has tolerated submissiveness for too long. Asia of today is dynamic; Asia is full of life.

We are not yes-men, I hope, sitting here saying 'yes' to this country or that, saying yes even to each other. I hope we are not. We are great countries in the world who rather like having freedom, if I may say so, without dictation. Well, if there is anything that Asia wants to tell them it is this: No dictation there is going to be in the future; no 'yes-men' in Asia, I hope, or in Africa. We have had enough of that in the past.

Therefore, we want to be friends with everybody because if there is something that may be called an approach to the minds and spirit of Asia, it is one of toleration and friendship and cooperation, not one of aggressiveness.

These words are not even faintly remembered now in India's ruling hierarchy where not the suffering and sorrow of the brave Vietnamese but the blandishments of Americans matter most. In fact, the present Congress rulers and the monopolies, which are now all praise for Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, are doing their damndest to blunt anti-imperialist sentiments of our people and make them forget the great and glorious traditions. And the attempts at devaluation in this sphere had started long before Americans got the Indian rupee down. In the coming days the drive against our people's anti-imperialist traditions and sentiments are bound to be intensified, for without this the sell-

out to America would always come up against stormy weather. Our people must cherish their great traditions and return to active anti-imperialism and in particular strengthen still more Afro-Asian solidarity.

If the government is turning its back on anti-imperialism and capitulating to the US and other imperialists, it is all the more urgent that the masses are roused and moved into action. The government wants the people to remain confused and passive and divided over such issues as Vietnam. This is also what Americans want. But on no account must that be allowed to happen.

The government's spineless policy in regard to US aggression can and must be reversed, if only we know how to rouse the deepest anti-imperialist feelings of our people, move and organise them in unity and on the broadest possible scale against US aggressors and in active, militant support for our heroic Vietnamese brothers and sisters. There are many Americans in India and can we not make them realise in the language they understand best that the Indian people can neither be bought nor sold, nor silenced?

If we all act—and act fearlessly—in unity, we can certainly compel the Government of India “to reverse its policy of surrender”, as the National Council of the Communist Party puts it, to US dictates, and take a bold initiative “to stop US aggression and war in Vietnam.” Let the strident voice of our people be raised for stopping the bombing of North Vietnam, for the withdrawal of US troops and the demolition of all US military bases in South Vietnam and for the recognition of the National Liberation Front as the sole authentic representative of the South Vietnamese people.

These steps are imperative for the restoration of peace in Vietnam and for its unification in accordance with the Geneva Agreements. This is the only way to ensure the emergence of a unified, independent, peace-loving Vietnam in the family of Asian nations. None can prevent the victory of the Vietnamese people.

COMMUNIST PARTY PUBLICATIONS

THE TASHKENT SPIRIT

by Romesh Chandra

30 Paise



KERALA'S CRY FOR JUSTICE

by C. Achutha Menon

30 Paise



INDIA AND THE GERMAN PROBLEM

by Sarada Mitra

50 Paise



BOMBAY TEXTILE GENERAL STRIKE

by S. G. Sardesai

30 Paise



THE PRESENT POLITICAL SITUATION

30 Paise

Order from

PEOPLE'S PUBLISHING HOUSE PRIVATE LTD.
5 Rani Jhansi Road

New Delhi-1